Welcome to Willow Academy

From the Principal's desk

Dear Future Parents

Thank you for making a move towards Christian Education. We are excited to start the journey with you, and know this will be the best investment choice you will make for your child.

Willow Academy was birthed out of a desire to see children educated in a Christian environment and with a biblical worldview. We are passionate about excellent education and Christian social interaction with a biblical foundation. Sharing the love of God and the gospel of Jesus Christ with our learners is not an optional extra, it is imperative.

Our vision is equipping learners to develop their individual potential and further God's Kingdom. Our mission is to partner with the learners and parents from the very foundation of their learning career right through until the beginning of their tertiary education. We aim to join hands with the parents and work closely together to develop the academic, spiritual, cultural and sporting growth of each child, thus ensuring a well-balanced and contented child.

As part of developing Christ-centered and God-fearing children, all our learners study the Word of God as part of their curriculum. We all participate in weekly worship service and daily devotions. We also encourage students to be involved in missions to help others – for example, in 2011 we sent a missionary team to Ghana. We welcome Christians from all denominations at our school.

We have dedicated Christian teachers with a passion for teaching all the subjects that we offer. We believe that each child is unique and worthy of a complete learning experience.

We are keen to hear from your and begin the partnership.

Be blessed

C. Rademeyer (Mrs)
Principal

School Campus

Our school is situated in the rapidly developing community of Fairview. The school building was used as a school in the late 1950's. At that time it was known as Willowdene Secondary School. We are currently looking to further develop our facilities to cater for the anticipated influx of new learners that will be joining our school.

History of the School

Willow Academy was born out of a desire for Christian education. It started with three children under the visionary Mrs Rose de Vos. She called her school Noah's Ark Pre-School. Noah's Ark still exists today and we still maintain an excellent relationship with them. In 1988, Ps Jimmy Crompton decided to start a school that the children from Noah's Ark could go to, and so began Word of Faith Christian School. After a short time, the school began to grow and needed new facilities. They were offered the current school building in Fairview and soon after, the school's name was changed to Willow Academy.

Governance

Firstly, the captain of the school is our Heavenly Father – without Him we cannot exist and we boldly declare this. We are a department of Word of Faith Christian Centre, and they act as our Spiritual covering. They are responsible for chairing our Board Meetings, with Ps Mariana Crompton being our current chairperson. We also fall under the Department of Education, NPO's Act, Umalusi, IEB and ACSI, and believe that we need to submit and honour these bodies, as they are there to protect us and keep us in right standing with good governance.

Curriculum

We educate learners from grade 0 to 12. On a daily basis, our learners are encouraged to follow Christ and make Christian-based decisions to see the world differently. Our learners are taught from a biblical worldview, which means that we teach the truths from the Bible and not what the world teaches.

Willow Academy follows the CAPS Curriculum and incorporates A Beka Christian books as far as possible.

1. Everything is taught form a Christian standpoint.
2. Every subject is taught with a high standard of education.
3. The textbooks and workbooks used are colourful, bright and beautifully presented.
4. The teaching methods are the best and produce excellent results in the learners.
5. Emphasis is placed on first acquiring knowledge and then applying skills using the knowledge learnt.
6. Our curriculum makes learning a happy and enjoyable experience.

Although we are an independent Christian school, we are guided by the CAPS Curriculum so as to ensure that our learners are never at an academic disadvantage. We voluntarily participate in the Annual National Assessments, IEB Core Skills and benchmark testing, and Mathematics diagnostic testing, as well as any suitable testing that can improve our teaching and learning outcomes. This ensures the quality and the pace of our learning is maintained and constantly improved.

Last year we upgraded our computer lab to include 24 state of the art PCs, and all learners from Grade 1 upwards now have timetabled access to these facilities. We realise that technology is here to stay and we are currently looking to adapt our teaching methods to accommodate this ever changing world.

As part our curriculum we also participate in external competitions (i.e. Maths Relay and Olympiads), as well as putting on our own entrepreneurs' days, various quizzes and a science expo.
Our Grade 10 to 12 learners follow the Independent Examination Board (IEB) assessment guidelines, and in Grade 12, they write the IEB NSC examinations. IEB is focused on preparing the learners for tertiary education. A large number of independent schools are in partnership with IEB due to their high standard of education and support structure for the teachers.

We are very proud of the matric class of 2015, who achieved a 100% pass rate, with 67% of our learners passing at Bachelor's Degree level.

Discipline Policy and Code of Conduct

The Bible says that we should, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." (Proverbs 22:6 KJV). A school needs to have a disciplined environment to encourage effective learning and training. At Willow Academy, we believe that discipline is a partnership between the parents and the school, and we need to work together. Every year we revise our discipline policy to keep our standards current, and every family is provided with the current Discipline Policy and Code of Conduct documents as compiled by each phase. All learners and parents are required to acknowledge and agree to the conditions set out in these documents.

School Uniform

Our uniform also falls under the heading of discipline. When a learner has respect for the way they look, they are able to work more effectively. Full school uniform is compulsory and regular uniform inspections are held, which includes hair and nail inspection.

We have separate summer and winter school uniforms, as well as a sports uniform. These are outlined in the Parent Guides, and are provided upon your child's acceptance at our school.

Sports Program

In the past two years we have introduced eight sporting codes to Willow Academy. We understand the importance of physical training, and that a healthy body creates a healthy mind. Sports participation is compulsory in all grades and contributes towards the Physical Education component of Life Skills and Life Orientation. Each learner is expected to play a winter and summer sport.

Grade 4 to 12 learners attend sports practice twice a week, while Grades 1 to 3 practice once per week.

Phase	Summer	Winter
Foundation Phase (Gr 1-3)		
Boys	Mini-Cricket / Athletics	Mini-Soccer
Girls	Mini-Tennis / Athletics	Mini-Hockey
Junior School (Gr 4-7)		
Boys	Cricket / Tennis / Athletics	Soccer
Girls	Tennis / Athletics	Hockey
High School (Gr 8-12)		
Boys	Cricket / Tennis / Athletics	Soccer / Volleyball
Girls	Tennis / Athletics	Hockey

Additionally, we offer a selection of sports at additional cost, including Taekwon-do, swimming, ballroom dancing and Future Kings touch rugby.

Swimming is considered a life skill that could save a child's life. Our ultimate goal is to have our own pool so that we can make swimming part of our curriculum. Currently our swimmers are coached and trained by a professional coach, with the learners transported to and from swimming lessons. Once a learner shows the potential to compete, they are placed in our high performance team, where they compete against other schools at numerous galas. The learners that have been coached by Trish Polis have done extremely well in the inter-school's galas.

Taekwon-do is a self-defense activity, where our learners can receive grading and also obtain their provincial colours.

We introduced ballroom dancing to our high school learners last year. They have since participated in examinations and many have received their bronze certificate. They also take part in social dances that are arranged by the dance company where they interact with other high schools.

The Future Kings touch rugby program is currently for the Grade R to 3 learners only, and it focuses on different ball skills and rugby techniques.

Chess is still new to Willow Academy. We hope to be competing in the near future and look forward to seeing the results.

Cultural Program

As part our whole child development, we encourage our learners to participate in various cultural activities. These include musical instruments, drama and choir.

From the beginning of this year we have partnered with Helen O'Grady to teach the Drama aspect of the Creative Arts curriculum to our Grade 4 to 9 learners . Our Grade R to 3 learners also participate in the Helen O'Grady drama program as part of our extra-mural activities.

We also have a well-rounded visual arts program and envision adding this to our expanding extra-mural activities in due course.

Junior School Leadership Program

We select our Junior Prefects in their Grade 7 year. We also have class monitors to assist them in the leadership program.

Outreaches

We are currently involved in supporting local charities. We realise that if children are introduced to charitable work at an early age, they will have a greater heart for their community as they mature and develop.

Camps

As part of our outdoors program, our Grade 3 to 12 learners attend camps annually, and we encourage all learners to attend. On these camps they get to know each other on a social level, face different challenges and get practice at problem solving.

High School

Our High School was established a few years ago, with our first Grade 12 class matriculating in 2012. Since then we have launched a number of societies and committees to encourage leadership development and school involvement among the learners. These are sports, Christian, outreach, social and SRC (Student Representative Council). We have also have an adventure club that goes on camps and hikes throughout the year.

We believe it is important to expose our learners to a more "hands on" approach to learning where possible, and as a result, they have been on several trips to places such as Cape Town and East London.

High School Leadership Program

As part of our leadership program, learners are encouraged to take responsibility in different areas of their school life. We give learners an opportunity to be a monitor of either their class, the tuck shop, computer lab or science lab, in order to give them a platform to display their leadership abilities.

As part of the prefect selection process our Grade 11's attend a leadership camp, present a manifesto to the school and attend a formal interview with the Principal and selection committee.

WAP (Willow Academy Parents)

Two years ago we established the Willow Academy parents' association. We are very proud to say that our parents have really partnered well with the school. Our WAP is divided into four committees, namely; social, fundraising, marketing and maintenance. We are hoping to see more parents get involved in the future, as this allows us to operate more effectively.

Conclusion

As you consider your child's future education, we pray that our Heavenly Father will grant you wisdom in the choices that you make. We at Willow Academy will endeavor to fulfill God's purpose and impact each and every learner and parent with the gospel of Jesus, to educate those entrusted to us, and to be partners with Him every day.

We know that should you choose Willow Academy as your school, you and your child will be very happy and blessed.

May God Bless you as you make this important decision.